

Message Text

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ACTION IO-10

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6894

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 04639

NESCO

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AORG, PORG, UNESCO, US

SUBJECT: ACTION ON ISRAELI ISSUES AT UNESCO

REF: (A) PARIS 1499; (B) PARIS 2772

SUMMARY: MANY PERM REPS OF MEMBER STATES INDICATE DEEP CONCERN OVER PROSPECT THAT US CONTRIBUTION TO UNESCO WILL BE SUSPENDED AND THUS ENDANGER FULL US PARTICIPATION. THEY HAVE EXPRESSED INTEREST IN UNDERTAKING SOME CONCILIATORY ACTION THAT COULD MEET US CONCERNS. IT IS NEVERTHELESS CLEAR THAT THERE IS STILL A GREAT GAP BETWEEN WHAT THE ISRAELIS SEEM TO INSIST UPON AND WHAT MEMBER STATES ARE WILLING TO DO REGARDING THE RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE 18TH GENERAL CONFERENCE WITHOUT SOME ISRAELI CONCESSION ON JERUSALEM EXCAVATIONS. HOWEVER, PERMDEL IS OF OPINION THAT, ALTHOUGH DRAMATIC SINGLE GESTURE IS POLITICALLY IMPOSSIBLE, THE US COULD QUIETLY SEEK TO GENERATE SUPPORT FOR MEASURES THAT OVER-TIME MAY LEAD TO MORE SIGNIFICANT ACTION. END OF SUMMARY

1. RECENT DISCUSSIONS WITH OTHER PERMDELS HAVE INDICATED INCREASING CONCERN AMONG MANY MEMBER STATES

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THAT US CONGRESSIONAL DIRECTIVES TO SUSPEND US CONTRI-

BUTION TO UNESCO MAY LEAD TO GRADUAL US WITHDRAWAL FROM FULL PARTICIPATION IN A MAJOR INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION. MEMBER STATES APPARENTLY FELT INITIALLY THAT US GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT BE LIKELY TO GO TO EXTREME OF SUSPENDING ITS CONTRIBUTION AND THEREBY DAMAGING OR REDUCING SEVERELY US PRESENCE AND INFLUENCE IN UNESCO; PARTICULARLY AS FRANCE AND SWITZERLAND ALONE AMONG WESTERN EUROPEANS MADE ONLY SYMBOLIC REDUCTIONS WHICH PROBABLY WILL NOT BE CARRIED OUT. ONLY RECENTLY, THEREFORE, DO OTHER MEMBER STATES SEEM TO HAVE ACCEPTED AS AN IMMINENT LIKELIHOOD THAT THE US CONTRIBUTION TO UNESCO WILL BE SUSPENDED, DESPITE PERMDEL WARNINGS SINCE THE GENERAL CONFERENCE ABOUT DEPTH AND PERSISTENCE OF US CONGRESSIONAL FEELING ON ANTI-ISRAEL RESOLUTIONS.

2. MOREOVER, THERE ARE INCREASING SIGNS THAT OTHER MEMBER STATES ARE WILLING TO GO A VERY LIMITED DISTANCE, BUT ONLY THAT, TO TRY AND SATISFY US REQUIREMENTS FOR CORRECTIVE "CONCRETE STEPS" AS A PRECONDITION FOR CONTINUING THE US CONTRIBUTION TO AND PRESENCE IN UNESCO. THE ISSUE CONSIDERED MOST SUSCEPTIBLE OF REMEDIAL ACTION IS THE QUESTION OF EUROPEAN REGIONAL MEMBERSHIP. ON THE OTHER HAND, NEITHER MEMBER STATES, THE DIRECTOR GENERAL AND SECRETARIAT, NOR PERMDEL SEE ANY IMMEDIATE HOPE FOR A REVERSAL, REPEAL OR DILUTION OF THE RESOLUTION ON THE JERUSALEM ISSUE, IN THE ABSENCE OF A MEANINGFUL CONCILIATORY GESTURE BY ISRAEL.

3. BY CONTRAST, GOI SENTIMENT SEEMS TO BE ONE OF UNYIELDING INSISTENCE UPON REPEAL OF THE JERUSALEM SANCTIONS RESOLUTION, OR ITS EFFECTIVE ANNULATION, WITHOUT ANY CONDITIONS. THIS IS EVIDENT FROM USDEL DISCUSSIONS WITH ISRAELI PERM DEL AND NOTICEABLE LACK OF ACTIVITY BY ISRAELIS IN MAKING ANY EFFORT HERE TO CREATE CLIMATE OF CONCILIATION. PERMDEL BELIEVES THAT CONCILIATORY ACTIONS COULD BE UNDERTAKEN WHICH, ALTHOUGH FALLING FAR SHORT OF DRAMATIC SUBSTANCE ISRAELIS NOW INSIST UPON, COULD LEAD TO SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT OF THE ATMOSPHERE AND BE CONDUCIVE TO GRADUAL BUT SURE PROGRESS TOWARDS SALVING ISRAELI SENSITIVITIES.

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4. THEREFORE, PERMDEL, PURSUANT TO INITIAL SUGGESTIONS IN CONVEYED REFTELS (A) AND (B), PROPOSES FOLLOWING AS POSSIBLE COURSES OF ACTION:
A) RESOLUTION INTRODUCED BY BROADLY REPRESENTATIVE

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NESCO

GROUP OF EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS REAFFIRMING UNESCO'S COMMITMENT TO IDEALS OF ITS CHARTER, ITS CENTRAL CONCERNS WITH ITS CONSTITUTIONALLY DEFINED SPHERES OF COMPETENCE, AND THE NEED FOR UNIVERSAL PARTICIPATION IN UNESCO'S PROGRAMS OF ALL ITS MEMBER STATES WITHOUT DISCRIMINATION. PERMDEL WILL SUBMIT BY SEPTTEL SUGGESTED TEXT OF RESOLUTION FOR DEPARTMENT CONSIDERATION. THIS RESOLUTION COULD BE INTRODUCED AT THIS SPRING EXBD SESSION AS A FIRST STEP.

(B) DEMARCHES TO WESTERN EUROPEANS AND OTHER NON-COMMUNIST ALLIES ON UNESCO EXBD COULD BE MADE TO HAVE THEM TAKE LEAD IN INTRODUCING A RESOLUTION THAT WOULD IMPLICITLY COUNTERACT GENERAL CONFERENCE DENIAL OF ISRAELI MEMBERSHIP IN EUROPEAN REGIONAL GROUP. RESOLUTION COULD STATE RIGHT OF ALL MEMBER STATES TO MEMBERSHIP IN REGIONAL GROUP WHOSE MEMBERS DESIRE THEIR PRESENCE, AND RECOMMENDATION THAT STATES NOT YET IN REGIONAL GROUP BE ACCORDED MEMBERSHIP AT NEXT UNESCO GENERAL CONFERENCE IN 1976. IN PRESENT ATMOSPHERE QUESTIONABLE WHETHER SUCH A RESOLUTION DIRECTLY REFERRING TO REGIONS WOULD BE PASSED AT SPRING EXBD. HOWEVER, DEPT. MAY WISH IMMEDIATELY BEGIN
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SOUNDING CAPITALS TO ASCERTAIN DEGREE OF SUPPORT THIS COURSE OF ACTION.

5. WHILE PERMDEL AWARE OF APPARENT ISRAELI INSISTENCE THAT NOTHING LESS THAN REPEAL OF RESOLUTIONS IS NOW ACCEPTABLE TO GOI, PERMDEL WOULD UNDERLINE THAT THIS SIMPLY IS NOT POSSIBLE AT THE PRESENT TIME. EVEN PERMREPS OF WESTERN EUROPEAN MEMBER STATES WHO CLOSEST TO US IN JUDGING 18TH GENERAL CONFERENCE ANTI-ISRAELI ACTIONS AS UNFAIR IN THE EXTREME, HAVE VERY QUALIFIED FEELINGS ON THE JERUSALEM EXCAVATIONS QUESTION. PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANTLY WESTERN EUROPEANS LIKE MANY OTHERS SEE PRESENT CRISIS AS A US DOMESTIC PROBLEM, AT LEAST IN PART BROUGHT ON BY A GOI ATTITUDE THAT FALLS ONLY JUST SHORT OF THE PUNITIVE EXTREME TO WHICH ARABS WENT AT THE GENERAL CONFERENCE. AMONG LDC'S, MOST NOTABLY THE BLACK AFRICANS, WHO DO NOT WISH TO SEE UNESCO UNDERMINED AT THE VERY TIME IT IS BEING HEADED BY AN AFRICAN FOR THE FIRST TIME IN IT'S HISTORY, STATE THAT THE US HAS LEGAL AND ESPECIALLY MORAL OBLIGATION TO ADHERE TO THE RULES OF THE GAME.

6. BASED ON PERMDEL SOUNDINGS AMONG BROAD CROSS SECTION, IT IS LIKELY THAT ANY US INITIATIVE WHICH COULD POSSIBLY BE INTERPRETED AS REQUIRING MEMBER STATES TO CHANGE THEIR POSITION AS A RESULT OF US THREATS OR PRESSURES WOULD BE STRONGLY RESISTED NOT ONLY BY LDC'S AND ARABS BUT ALSO BY SOVIET BLOC AND SOME WESTERN EUROPEANS, NOTABLY THE SCANDINAVIANS AND FRANCE.

7. THEREFORE, TO SUM UP, OUR VANTAGE POINT STRONGLY INDICATES THAT THE BEST COURSE OF ACTION WOULD BE ONE OF PROMOTING A GRADUAL NEUTRALIZATION OF THE SUBSTANTIVE EFFECTS OF THE 18TH GENERAL CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS CONCERNING ISRAEL IN THE ABSENCE OF ANY POSSIBILITY THAT UNESCO MEMBER STATES WILL AGREE TO THE KIND OF DRAMATIC REVERSAL THAT THE ISRAELIS SEEK. EVEN SUCH LIMITED STEPS WILL REQUIRE CAREFUL ADVANCE PREPARATION, ESPECIALLY BY MEANS OF DEMARCHES TO CAPITALS AND WASHINGTON EMBASSIES OF MEMBER STATES REPRESENTED ON

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EXBD. IT IS URGENT THAT THIS BEGIN NO LATER THAN EARLY APRIL. FURTHER, THE US SHOULD PROCEED IN A

LOW KEY AS FAR AS OPEN EXBD DEBATE IS CONCERNED, OF THESE SENSITIVE MEASURES. THE WESTERN EUROPEANS WILL HAVE TO TAKE A STRONG PUBLIC LEAD MOST NOTABLY ON THE REGIONAL ISSUE QUESTION. THE TACTIC ON THIS QUESTION SHOULD BE TO PERSUADE EUROPEANS TO UNDERTAKE INITIATIVE THAT SERVES THEIR INTERESTS BY INSURING A CONTINUED EFFECTIVE US PRESENCE IN UNESCO AS OPPOSED TO THE ALTERNATIVE OF LEAVING THE FIELD OPEN TO THE SOVIETS AND MORE MILITANT LDC'S.

7. PERMDEL WILL CONTINUE SOUNDINGS AND CONVEY SITUATION ANALYSIS FURTHER. HOWEVER, PERMDEL WOULD STRESS THAT TIME FAST APPROACHING TO LAY GROUNDWORK FOR MAY EXECUTIVE BOARD SESSION.
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